

INFORMATION REPORT

CD NO. 25X1A

25X1A

COUNTRY Korea

SUBJECT North Korean Trading Companies

DATE DISTR. 25 APR 50

NO. OF PAGES 3

PLACE 25X1A

NO. OF ENCLS.
(LISTED BELOW)

DATE OF
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1. There are three major foreign trading companies in North Korea: the Choson Commercial Company, Ltd. (朝鮮商業株式會社), the Chong Yung Commercial Company, Ltd. (正隆商務株式會社), and the Se Kye Company (世界洋行).
 2. The Choson Commercial Company is subordinated to the Department of Commerce of North Korea and has its headquarters at Pyongyang. The firm has overseas correspondents and dispatch agents at Hongkong and Tientsin, Mukden, Harbin, Dairen, Antung (124-23, 40-09), Tumen (129-50, 42-55), and Mutanchiang (129-37, 44-35). In North Korea it has branch offices at the following places:

Changjon	(128-12, 38-44)
Chinnampo	(125-24, 38-14)
Chongjin	(129-49, 41-46)
Chorwon	(127-12, 38-11)
Chunggangjin	(126-52, 41-46)
Haeju	(125-42, 38-02)
Hoeryong	(129-45, 42-25)
Hungnam	(127-33, 39-52)
Hyesanjin	(128-10, 41-24)

Manpojin	(126-18, 41-10)
Najin-dong	(130-15, 42-10)
Namyang-dong	(129-52, 42-57)
Simp'o-dong	(129-28, 43-56)
Sinuiju	(124-24, 40-06)
Songjin	(129-12, 40-40)
Wonsan	(127-26, 39-10)
Yohyon	(126-26, 38-00)
Yonchon	(127-04, 38-06)

3. The Chong Yung Commercial Company is a private firm not directly controlled by the North Korean Department of Commerce but closely connected with it. Its main office is at Chongjin, with branches in North Korea at Pyongyang, Chinmampo, Simpo-dong, Namyang-dong, Sinuiju, and Wonsan. Overseas correspondents and dispatch offices are at Hongkong, Dairen, Antung, and Tumen.
 4. The Se Kye Company is an organ of the North Korean Labor Party, with its main offices in Pyongyang. Branches operate in Wonsan, Chongjin, Sinuiju, Chinmampo, and Namyang-dong.
 5. Vessels for trade to South Korea have been chartered by the following North Korean shipping agencies :

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PARA82-004678004700570001-4	

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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Choson Hung Op Sa (朝鮮興業社), Wonsan and Simpo-dong.

Choson Industrial Company (朝鮮物産公司), Wonsan, Simpo-dong, Pyongyang.

Choson Sa Op Company (朝鮮産業社), Wonsan.

Choson Trading Company (朝鮮商事株式会社), Wonsan and Simpo-dong.

Ko Ryō Trading Company (高麗貿易社), Wonsan.

Pu Yōng Marine Company (富榮水產公司), Wonsan.

Sohn Il Hung Op Sa (鮮一興業社), Wonsan, Simpo-dong, and Pyongyang.

6. Shipments for foreign trade from North Korea can be handled only through the agencies listed above. These firms average about twenty-three percent on their investments, of which they turn over fifteen percent to the North Korean government.

7. Individuals acting as traders between North and South Korea during late 1949 include the following:

CH'OE Ho-hak (崔浩鶴), Hongwon	PAK Kyōng-sōn (朴景善), Hongwon
CH'OE Ho-pong (崔浩鳳), Hongwon	YANG Su-ho (梁筭高), Wonsan
CHONG Pok-tong (鄭福同), Pyongyang	YI Hak-su (李學洙), Songjin
HONG Sa-o (洪思梧), Hongwon	YI Sóng-suk (李成淑), Pyongyang
KIM Chóng-hyōn (金龍鉉), Sinuiju	YI Yong-chun (李龍俊), Wonsan
KIM Chong-uk (金鍾郁), Hongwon	

8. Very little regular trade has occurred between North and South Korea since August 1948, but there is an active smuggling traffic.** The chief ports in the south involved in this are Pusan (129-02, 35-06) and Pohang (129-22, 36-02). Only one firm of any consequence is reported engaged in overland smuggling, the Sam Hung Commercial Company, Ltd., with offices on the third floor of the Kyōng Hyang Press Building in Seoul, but its connections are not known.

9. The North Star Trading Company in Seoul, which was founded by KIM Sóng-sik (金星植), was not very active during his absence from Seoul. KIM, born in Cholla Province, is a Christian; he was formerly an employee of the Chinese customs service in Lungchingtsun (129-26, 42-47). After the establishment of Manchukuo, he traded in Harbin and Mukden, then, following the end of the war, came to Korea and managed the Choson Correspondence Company, then started the North Star Company. Under threat of arrest, he left Korea for Hongkong, where he engaged in trade with North Korea. He returned to Seoul in fall 1949 after a personal assurance to his wife from President RHEE that he would receive no harm, but he is still under police suspicion.

10. The Li Min Company (利民公司), a Chinese trading company disguised as a Chinese Economics Investigating Commission, is active in North Korea.*** Until November 1948, the Chang Hung Trading Company (長興公司), a North Korean agency, was active in Dairen; it is not known whether it is still in operation.

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